

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DPI-NR 2023-40

Wednesday, May 17, 2023

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Dozens of Wisconsin students honored for academic achievement through GEAR UP initiative

38 students complete program supporting traditionally underrepresented students

GREEN BAY – Last weekend, 38 students from across Wisconsin solidified their dedication toward academic success by completing the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction’s Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) initiative.

The group of students, who represent the first graduating cohort of the [GEAR UP Rising Phoenix Early College High School Program](#), in partnership with the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay, worked to further their education and obtain college credits and their high school diploma. They will earn over 2,000 college credit hours combined by August 2023. Among the 38 students taking part in a recognition ceremony, 23 will graduate with an associate’s degree from UW-Green Bay. Students in the GEAR UP Rising Phoenix cohort are from the Green Bay area, the Wausau area, the Milwaukee area, and Shawano.

“I am so proud of these students for growing not just as learners, but also as individuals,” State Superintendent Dr. Jill Underly said. “Completing the GEAR UP program is a tribute to the tireless work they put in to achieve their goals, and I look forward to seeing and hearing where they go next and what their next successes are. I congratulate them for their impressive accomplishments.”

The Wisconsin DPI’s GEAR UP assists low-income, first-generation, and traditionally underrepresented students in gaining their high school diploma and preparing them for success in postsecondary education through college and career readiness programming. Through academic and career planning, tutoring, visits to colleges and cultural events and mentoring, GEAR UP helps increase academic performance and attendance among students, complete high school, and be prepared for possible postsecondary enrollment and career attainment. Photos for publication of the GEAR UP students from this past weekend’s celebration are available upon request.

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GEAR UP is a program provided by the Wisconsin Educational Opportunity Programs, which prepare youth and adults to pursue higher educational opportunities by providing college and career readiness programs, resources, and support. [Visit the WEOP's webpage for more information on offerings.](#)

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NOTE: Photos of the GEAR UP students from this past weekend's celebration are available upon request. Contact the Wisconsin DPI at Media.Inquiries@dpi.wi.gov for photos. This news release is available online [on the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction's website.](#)